

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 are cancelled and claim 9 is amended.

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1 and 2 (Cancelled).

3. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine including an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

5 checking the operability of at least one component by a diagnostic function (D);

causing said diagnostic function (D) to transmit data (CB) that said diagnostic function (D) could have found a fault to a central function (CF) in a format uniform for all diagnostic functions (D); and,

10 causing said central function (CF) to process said data (CB),

wherein each of said diagnostic functions (D) communicates with the central function (CF) via an interface (IF); and, the central function (CF) establishes for each diagnostic  
15 function (D), which identifies itself to said central function (CF) at said interface (FID), a region (REC) of a suitable data structure wherein data for the diagnostic

function (D) and

the following: an identifier (S) of the diagnostic  
20 function (D), data (CB) as to whether the diagnostic function (D)  
could have run and data (IB) as to whether the diagnostic  
function (D) is blocked or can run are stored.

4. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal  
combustion engine including an internal combustion engine of a  
motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

checking the operability of at least one component by a  
5 diagnostic function (D);

causing said diagnostic function (D) to transmit data (CB)  
that said diagnostic function (D) could have found a fault to a  
central function (CF) in a format uniform for all diagnostic  
functions (D); and,

10 causing said central function (CF) to process said  
data (CB),

wherein the central function (CF) detects whether specific  
operating conditions of the internal combustion engine are  
satisfied whereat the running of the diagnostic function (D) is  
15 expected with a certain frequency of occurrence and wherein the  
central function (CF) determines a first numerical value (CVA)  
which is based on a number of possible executions of the  
diagnostic function (D) and determines a second numerical  
value (CVB) which is based on the number of specific operating  
20 conditions which have actually been present.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the central

function (CF) blocks an execution of the diagnostic function (D) and a change of the second numerical value (CVB) by a common functionality (INH) when a component (S2, S3) is defective, the component (S2, S3) being necessary for achieving a purposeful diagnostic result.

6. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine including an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

checking the operability of at least one component by a diagnostic function (D);

causing said diagnostic function (D) to transmit data (CB) that said diagnostic function (D) could have found a fault to a central function (CF) in a format uniform for all diagnostic functions (D); and,

causing said central function (CF) to process said data (CB),

wherein a third numerical value (CVC) is determined in the central function (CF), said numerical value (CVC) being based on a number of specific operating conditions which actually were present.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein a change of the third numerical value (CVC) is blocked in the central function (CF) if it is determined that a component (S3) is defective which is necessary in order to detect whether the specific operating conditions were present.

8. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine including an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

checking the operability of at least one component by a  
5 diagnostic function (D);

causing said diagnostic function (D) to transmit data (CB) that said diagnostic function (D) could have found a fault to a central function (CF) in a format uniform for all diagnostic functions (D); and,

10 causing said central function (CF) to process said data (CB),

wherein a fourth numerical value (CVD) is determined in the central function (CF) which is based on the number of starts of the internal combustion engine.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~ claim 3, wherein the content of the regions region (REC) of the suitable data structure is inquired of in the central function (CF) in a specific computation raster (CALC) which is slow relative to  
5 other functions and corresponding numerical values (CVA, CVB) are determined and stored, with these numerical values (CVA, CVB) being specific to the particular diagnostic function (D).

10. (Previously Presented) A method for operating an internal combustion engine including an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

checking the operability of at least one component by a  
5 diagnostic function (D);

causing said diagnostic function (D) to transmit data (CB) that said diagnostic function (D) could have found a fault to a central function (CF) in a format uniform for all diagnostic functions (D); and,

10 causing said central function (CF) to process said data (CB),

wherein, when an external inquiry apparatus is connected, in the central function (CF), that quotient (MIN) from a particular first numerical value (CVA) and a particular second numerical value (CVB) of a plurality of diagnostic functions (D) is  
15 outputted, which has the lowest value; and, the quotient (MIN) and the data, from which it becomes apparent to which diagnostic function (D) the quotient (MIN) is allocated, are transmitted to the external inquiry apparatus.

Claims 11 and 12 (Cancelled).